



PUBLIC HEALTH BYTES

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Henrico Health Department's Newsletter

Working in partnership
with the citizens of
Henrico County to create
the conditions for health.

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Communicable Diseases

Henrico Roundup: Varicella - Clusters of chickenpox cases among elementary school students were recently reported to Henrico Health Department. As a reminder, effective June 2006, two doses of varicella vaccine are now routinely recommended for all susceptible persons. During a varicella outbreak, persons who have received one dose of varicella vaccine should receive a second dose, provided the appropriate vaccination interval has elapsed since the first dose (3 months for persons 12 months to 12 years, and at least 4 weeks for persons aged 13 years of age and older). The vaccine is 70% to 100% effective in preventing illness or modifying the severity of illness if used within 3 days, and possibly up to 5 days, after exposure. The latest ACIP recommendation on prevention of varicella can be accessed at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5604a1.htm>

With shipments of varicella and especially MMRV (ProQuad®) vaccines delayed or temporarily discontinued, use of single antigen varicella vaccine in a post-exposure situation for older children and adults who have already received one dose should be weighed with the need for protection of infants needing the primary dose at 12 to 15 months.

Seasonal Influenza Corner

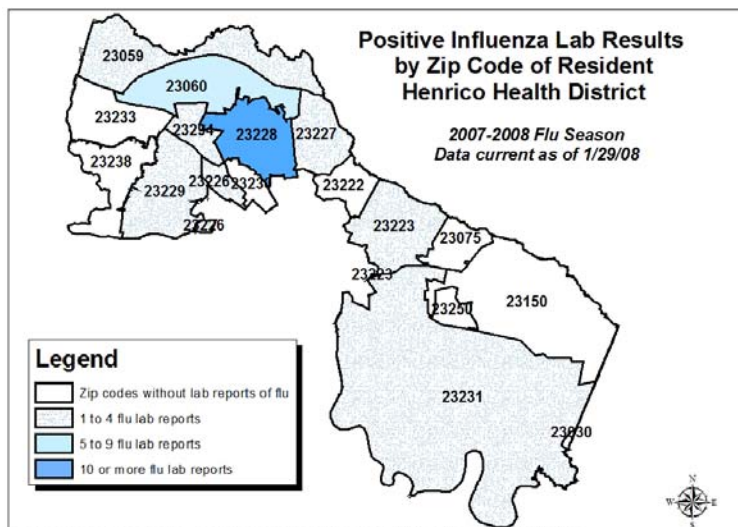
Virginia 2007-08 Influenza Surveillance Activity Level for Week 4 (as of 1/24/2008): **Widespread**

Virginia is reporting "Widespread" influenza activity. See Virginia's flu data at:

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/Epidemiology/Surveillance/Influenza/index.htm>

CDC has just issued a health advisory containing updated information about influenza and bacterial co-infections in children and providing interim testing and treatment recommendations. Details at:

<http://www2a.cdc.gov/HAN/ArchiveSys/ViewMsgV.asp?AlertNum=00268>



Pandemic Flu - ALERT PHASE: WHO 3; US: 0

Pandemic/Avian Flu Update: Human Cases— Pakistan has confirmed the country's first case of human infection with the H5N1 avian influenza virus, while new cases were reported in Egypt (4), Indonesia (8) and Vietnam (2). As of 1/30/08, the cumulative number of confirmed human H5N1 cases for 2003-2008 is 357, of which 224 have been fatal. 2007 marked the ten year anniversary of human infection with avian flu, H5N1, in Hong Kong in 1997. **Animal Cases** - In the first month of 2008, highly pathogenic H5 has been detected in animals in (alphabetically): Benin, China, Egypt, Germany, India, Iran, Israel, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and Vietnam. Last year, most outbreaks of highly pathogenic H5 occurred between January and April, peaking in March, and concentrated primarily in Asia and Africa.

Syphilis Reminder

Syphilis Rx: Syphilis continues to be an issue locally. Remember that Benzathine penicillin G (Bicillin L-A®) is the preferred drug for treatment of all stages of syphilis (excluding neurosyphilis) for anyone without a penicillin allergy (See: www.cdc.gov/std). Doxycycline is a recommended alternative only for non-pregnant individuals with penicillin allergy (limited evidence). Please refer any patient with syphilis (excluding neurosyphilis) unable to access Bicillin L-A® to the local health department for treatment at no cost. **Do not use Bicillin C-R® for syphilis.**

Emergency Preparedness

Emergency Support Function-8 (ESF-8): Henrico County's Health and Medical Advisory Group Meeting is scheduled for February 22nd from 9-11 AM in the Health and Human Services Building Demonstration Kitchen. The agenda will include an emergency preparedness update as well as information regarding our infant mortality project, **Operation HELP (starting at 10 AM)**. We encourage your participation in this community meeting. For more information please call 804-501-7250. **MRC:** A special regional training session on the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) was held on January 29th. Our guest speaker was the state SNS coordinator, Steve Harrison. For more information about SNS or MRC, please call 804-501-4643.

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